

**Early Literacy**



# **VOCABULARY**

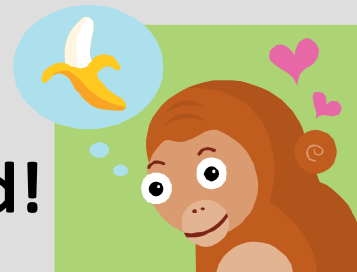
**Connie Colbaugh**

# VOCABULARY is . . .

**knowing**

the names of things,  
feelings, concepts, and  
ideas.

It's more than just a word!



# Types of Word Knowledge

- Terry Gerber → Unknown
- Tom Cruise → Known
- Your mother/father  
Your husband/wife → Own

# Word Classification

- **Unknown:** Haven't seen or heard this word or you've seen or heard it but can't define it.
- **Known:** You can define this word.
- **Owned:** You can define this word and you can relate it to other words and terms.

*... in teaching vocabulary the intent is for the child to regard any new word as more than just a label but as a fully formed idea.*

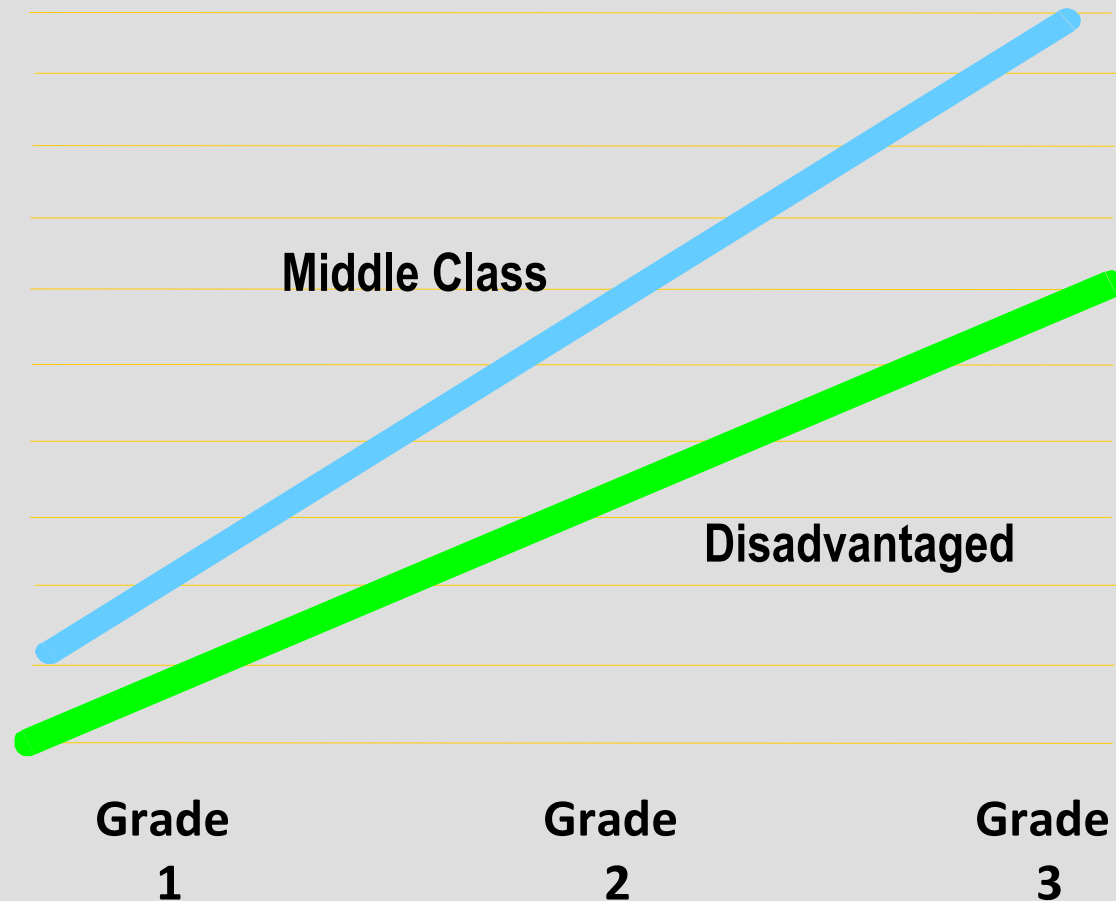
Shaywitz, 2004

# VOCABULARY RESEARCH

## Practical Differences

- ☐ Children enter school with a listening vocabulary ranging between 2500 and 5000 words.
- ☐ First graders from higher SES groups know twice as many words as lower SES children (Grater & Slater, 1987).
- ☐ College entrants need about 11,000 to 14,000 root words (meter in thermometer or centimeter).

# New Words Per Grade Level



Baker, Simmons, & Kame'enui, 1997

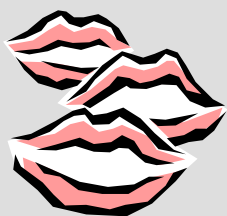
# CLOSING THE VOCABULARY GAP

- ❑ In 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, children need to learn 800+ words per year, about 2 per day.
- ❑ Children need to learn 2,000 to 3,000 new words each year from 3<sup>rd</sup> grade onward, about 6-8 per day.
- ❑ Children need to encounter a word about *12 times* before they know it well enough to improve their comprehension.
- ❑ To keep up a child needs to learn at a rate of 2000-3000 words per year. **To close the gap, they need to exceed that.**

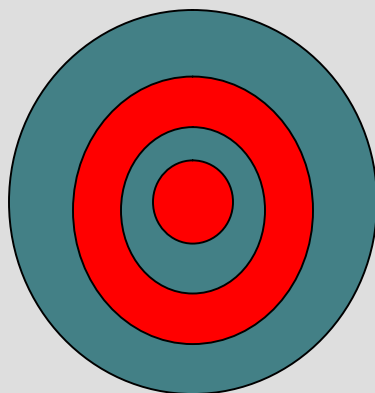
Biemiller: Nagy & Anderson



# Target Vocabulary



Speaking



Singing



Reading



Text Talk

# Babies...

## Talking and Singing



Even though a baby cannot yet speak, it is important to talk and sing with her. Children who are spoken to a lot during their early years end up knowing many more words than those who are not spoken to very much.

# ***Sing to the tune of “Do Your Ears Hang Low***

*(Match actions to the words)*

**A  
C  
T  
I  
V  
I  
T  
Y**

**I have ten little fingers  
And they all belong to me.  
I can make them do things,  
Would you like to see?**

**I can shut them up tight,  
Or open them all wide,  
I can put them all together,  
Or make them all hide.**

**I can make them jump high,  
I can make them fall down low.  
I can make them clap loud,  
Or clap them soft and slow.**

# Toddlers...

Talking  
Singing  
Reading



# ACTIVITY



Use the colored objects provided for each color as you sing the song.

*(sung to the tune of "The Hokey Pokey")*

**You put the (red) \_\_\_\_\_ in,**

**You take the (red) \_\_\_\_\_ out.**

**You put the (red) \_\_\_\_\_ in and you shake it all about.**

**You do the Hokey Pokey  
and you turn yourself around,  
That's what it's all about!**

# Preschoolers...

*...word knowledge is strongly related to reading proficiency in particular and school achievement in general.*



Adapted from Beck, McKeown, and Kucan, 2002

# ACTIVITY



- Pick out words from one of the books provided.
- For familiar words, think of a new word that has a similar meaning.
- For unfamiliar words, think of child-friendly definitions.

## EXAMPLES

### Familiar words

**Small** = little, tiny

**Big** = large, enormous,  
huge

### Unfamiliar Words

**Author** = person who wrote the  
book

**Illustrator** = person who drew the  
pictures

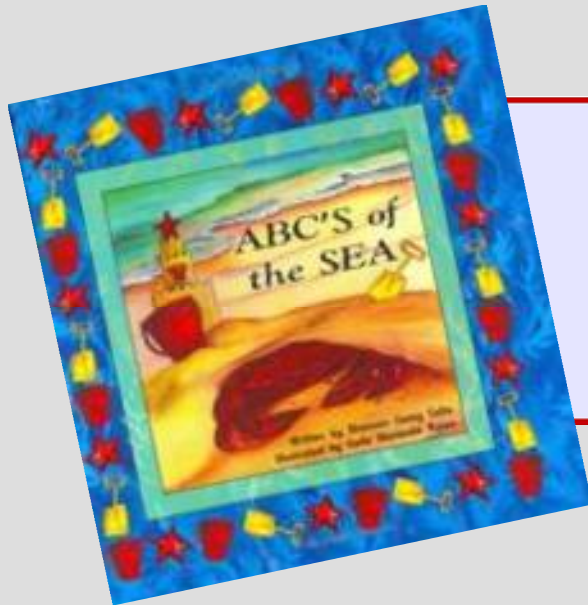


# BUILDING WORDS

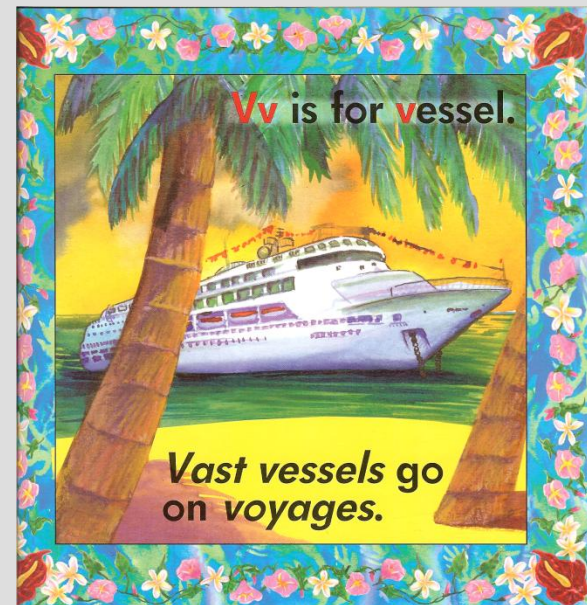
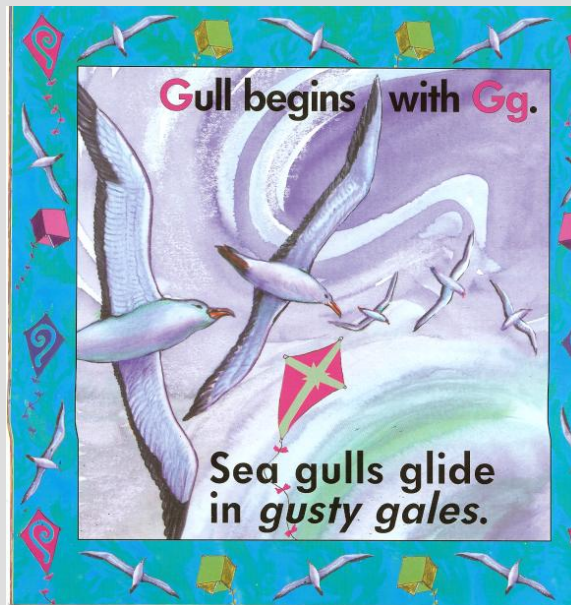
Having a large vocabulary and knowing the names of things are skills children need later when they learn to sound out or recognize words.

Books give us different words than those we use in normal conversations or that we hear on television.



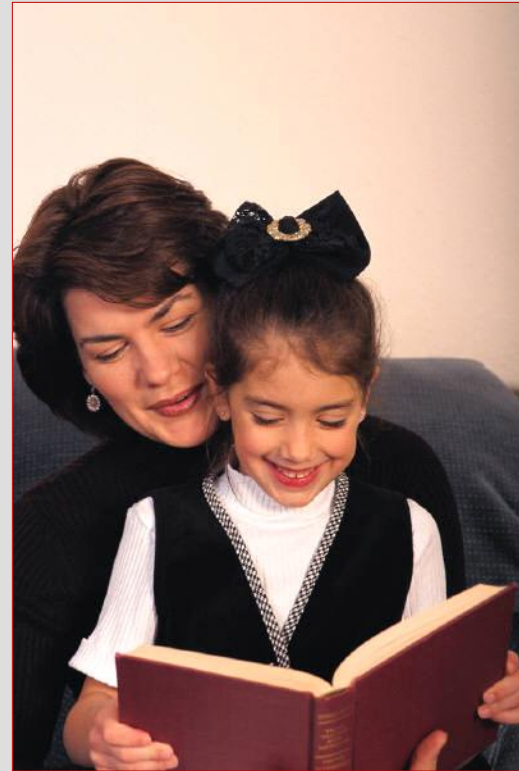


**Author: Shannon Casey Celia**  
**Illustrator: Carla Marlenee Bates**



# School-Age...

*Oral vocabulary is key  
when a beginning reader  
makes the transition  
from oral to written  
forms ...*



McCardle and Chhabra, 2004

# ACTIVITY



- Read the story portion with your partner(s).
- On the matching handout, use other words that mean the same as the underlined words.
- How does changing the words make the story different?

From the story,  
*Skippyjon Jones in the Doghouse*,  
by Judith Schachner



Between the hours of 1 p.m. and 3 p.m., Skippyjon Jones created his \_\_\_\_\_ piece of artwork ever.

(another word that means “finest”)

It went up and down and all around the newly painted hall. And this \_\_\_\_\_.

(another phrase that means “rubbed his mama’s fur the wrong way”)

“Drop that crayon right now, Mr. Doodlepaws,”  
\_\_\_\_\_ Mama Junebug Jones.

(another word that means “commanded”)

“You’re not the boss of me,” said Skippyjon Jones.

“\_\_\_\_\_, Mr. Beans,” said Mama.

(another phrase that means “in your dreams”)

“I cannot believe that in two \_\_\_\_\_ hours you

(another word that means “quiet”)

covered the walls with those cockeyed Chihuahuas,”  
she scolded. “You are not a Chihuahua. You are a  
naughty Siamese cat. And you need a \_\_\_\_\_

(another way to say “time-out”)

to think about that.” The kitty boy did not \_\_\_\_\_.

(another words that means “budge”)



*What words  
should we  
teach?*

# Choosing Words to Teach

- **Tier 1:** Everyday Words
- **Tier 2:** Extended Words
- **Tier 3:** Expert Words

**So many words, so little time.**

# **Tier 1: Everyday Words**

## **“SHOW & GO”**

- Basic words that rarely require instruction
- Examples: *clock, baby, happy, walk*



## Tier 3: Expert Words

- Words that are low in frequency of use
- They are often limited to a specific domain
- Examples: *stethoscope, barometer, sauté, eviscerated*



## **Tier 2: Extended Words**

- Words that are of high frequency for mature language users
- Words that extend and enrich students' reading and writing vocabularies
- Examples: *ridiculous, fortunate, grateful, coincidence, curious*

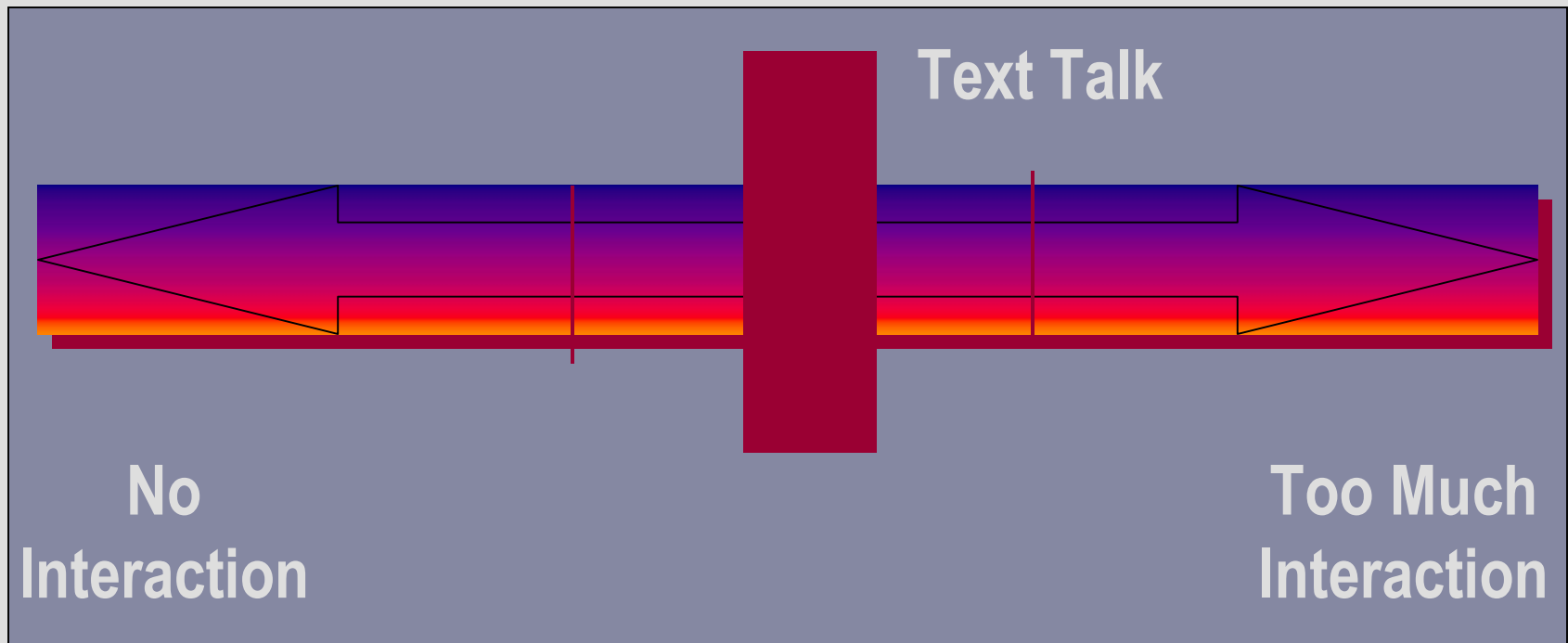
# Text Talk

Beck and McKeown, 2001



- Enhances students' comprehension and understanding of a text
- Requires systematic planning
- Entails Interaction with students while reading aloud

# A Continuum of Read Alouds



# Teaching Vocabulary through Text Talk

After the story is read:

- ➊ Read the sentence in the story that contains the targeted word.
- ➋ Ask the children to repeat the word.
- ➌ Explain the meaning of the word.
- ➍ Provide examples other than those used in the story.
- ➎ Ask children to provide their own examples.
- ➏ Ask children to say the word again.

## Teaching Vocabulary Through Text Talk

**Step 1:** Read the sentence in the story that contains the targeted word.

*“Lisa was **reluctant** to leave the laundromat without Corduroy.”*

## Teaching Vocabulary Through Text Talk

**Step ②** : Ask the children to repeat the word.

*“Say the word **reluctant** with me.”*

## Teaching Vocabulary Through Text Talk

**Step ③** : Explain the meaning of the word.

*“Reluctant means you are not sure you want to do something.”*



## Teaching Vocabulary Through Text Talk

**Step 4** : Provide examples other than those used in the story.

*“Someone might be **reluctant** to ride a roller coaster because it looks scary.”*

## Teaching Vocabulary Through Text Talk

**Step 5** : Children provide their own examples.

*“Tell about something you would be **reluctant** to do. You can start by saying, ‘I would be **reluctant** to \_\_\_\_\_.’”*

## Teaching Vocabulary Through Text Talk

**Step ⑥:** Children say the word again.

*“What’s the word we’ve been  
talking about?”* (**Reluctant**)

# Activity

Now You Try It!



1. *My mother says I'm a curious kid.*



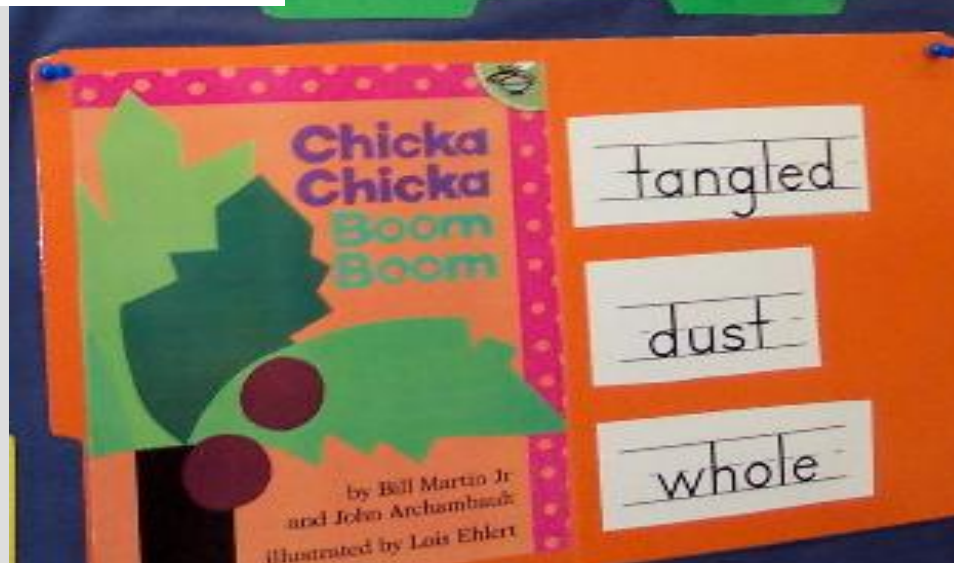
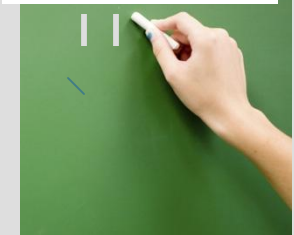
2. *I notice the feathers of a bird,  
or the golden eye of a frog.*

# MULTIPLE EXPOSURES



Listening  
Count

chase

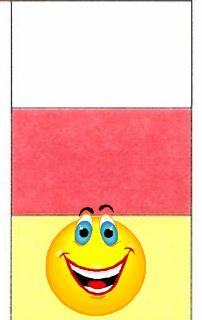
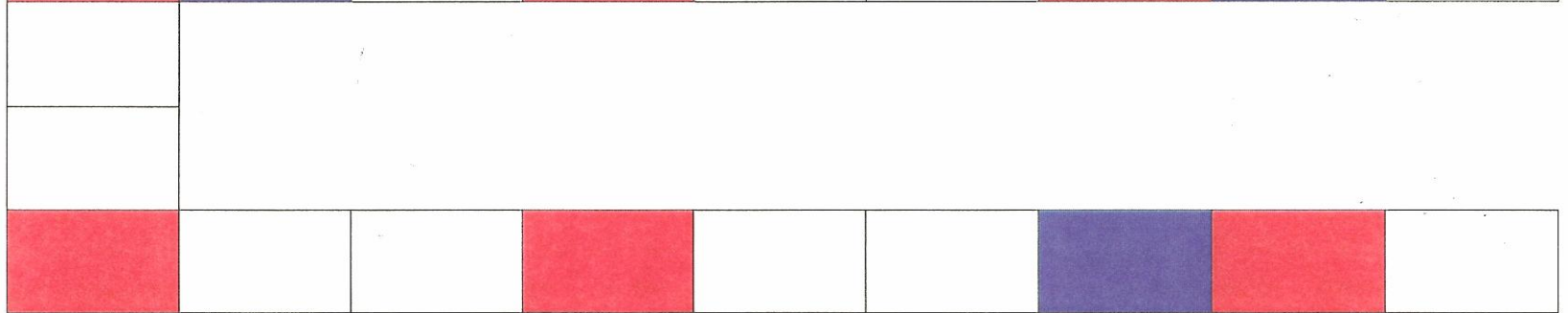


Rock Jar





3

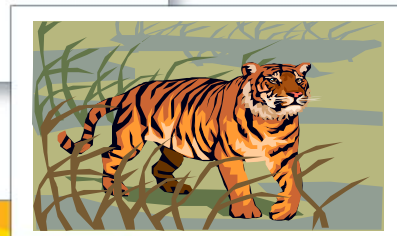
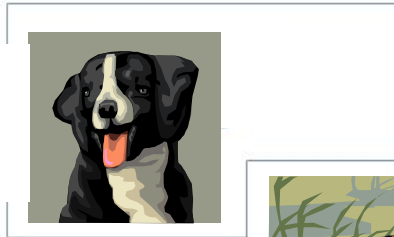


I see a . . .

cat



dog



tiger



## **Model & Practice**

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**“The dog has  
a pink tongue .”**



**“The cat has  
a long tail .”**



**“The tiger has  
black stripes .”**





## SENTENCES



The cat has a long, **striped, furry** tail.



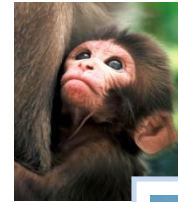
The dog has a pink tongue **hanging from its mouth.**



The tiger has black stripes **on orange fur.**

# ACTIVITY

SENTENCES





*... to a great extent  
within classrooms, the language used  
by teachers and students determines  
what is learned and how learning  
takes place.*

Wilkinson and Silliman, 2000

# Thank you!

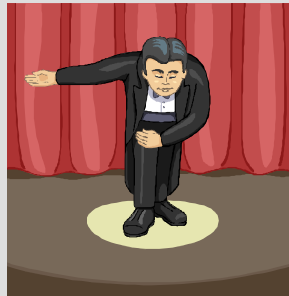


*Merci*



*La'afetai*

*Köszönettel*



## **CREDITS**

- Colorado Reading First, “Vocabulary for Specialists” presentation, 2008
- Idaho Commission for Libraries, “LitCenters Vocabulary” Document, 2009
- Jo Robinson, Consultant, “Oral Language & Vocabulary” presentation, American Samoa, 2008

**Recommended Resources at [www.fcrr.org](http://www.fcrr.org)**